

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PORT OF SPAIN 2306

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP (YOUNG, ANDREW)
SUB: AMB YOUNG MEETING WITH FONSEC ROEL

1. SUMMARY: AT AN AUGUST 8 MEETING ATTENDED BY AMBASSADOR YOUNG, FOREIGN SECRETARY ROEL AND RESPECTIVE STAFF MEMBERS, CONCERSATION CENTERED ON LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN PANAMA CANAL NEGOTIATIONS AND ON UNDOCUMENTED ALIENS. ROEL EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR US BRIEFINGS ON PANAMA AND INDICATED THAT THE BOGOTA MEETING HELPED CLEAR TORRIJOS' MIND ON VARIOUS ISSUES AND INDICATED HE WOULD EXERT MORAL PRESSURE ON TORRIJOS TO COMPLETE NEGOTIATIONS SOON. IN A LENGTHY BUT INCONCLUSIVE PRESENTION ON UNDOCUMENTED ALIENS, ROEL CAST THE ISSUE AS MORE OF A US THAN A MEXICAN CAUSED PROBLEM AND INDICATED HE WOULD LIKE TO ARGUE HIS CASE PERSONALLY IN CONGRESS. END SUMMARY.

1. AMBASSADOR YOUNG, MEMBERS OF HIS PARTY, AMBASSADOR LUCEY AND EMBOFFS MET MORNING AUGUST 8 FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE HOUR 15 MINUTES WITH FONSEC SANTIAGO ROEL, SUB-SECRETARY ROSENSWEIG-DIAZ AND DIRECTOR INTERNATIONAL ORG AFFAIRS SERGIO GONZALEZ GALVEZ. FOLLOWING IS SUMMARY OF
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HIGHLIGHTS:

A. PANAMA. ROEL EXPRSED APPRECIATION FOR EARLIER
USG BRIEFING ON STATUS PANAMA CANAL NEGOTIATIONS AND

BRIEFLY REVIEWED DEVELOPMENTS AT BOGOTA PRESIDENTIAL
MEETING AUGUST 5-6. ROEL CHARACTERIZED US POSITION ON

CANAL TREATY AS POSITIVE, INDICATING THAT ONLY SEA LEVEL CANAL/THIRD LOCK'S OPTION AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS REMAIN TO BE RESOLVED. HE SAID PANAMA APPEARS READY TO ACCEPT NEW TREATY PROVIDED AGREEMENT CAN BE REACHED ON ISSUES OF EXPANSION AND ECONOMIC ARRANGEMENTS. HE SAID QUESTION OF SEA-LEVEL CANAL OPTION HAD CREATED CONSIDERABLE STIR IN BOGOTA. HE WAS AWARE, HOWEVER, OF PANAMANIAN COUNTER-PROPOSAL THAT USG AND PANAMA RESOLVE ISSUE BY AGREEING TO JOINT STUDY OF FEASIBILITY OF NEW SEA-LEVEL CANAL, AND IF CONSTRUCTION APPEARS WARRANTED, THEN SEEK TO NEGOTIATE TERMS ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH COUNTRIES. AMBASSADOR LUCEY THEN OUTLINED HIS UNDERSTANDING RE STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS AND EXPRESSED HOPE TREATY COULD BE COMPLETED SOON SO THAT RATIFICATION PROCESS COULD MOVE FORWARD. HE ALSO NOTED LANDS/WATERS ISSUE IS STILL BEING NEGOTIATED.

AMBASSADOR YOUNG SIAD USG IS SENSITIVE TO PANAMA'S INTERNAL POLITICAL PROBLEMS BUT ADDED THAT USG ALSO FACES DOMESTIC PROBLEM. BOGOTA MEETING WAS IMPORTANT AS CLEAR INDICATION TO US CONGRESS AND PEOPLE THAT USG HAS TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE PERCEPTION OF ENTIRE HEMISPHERE NOT JUST PANAMA. ROEL REPLIED THAT MEXICO REGARDS NEW TREATY AS FURTHER STEP TOWARD DECOLONIZING LA. HE SAID BOGOTA MEETING SERVED USEFUL PRUPOSE IN HELPING "CLEAR TORRIJOS' MIND". LATTER IS SOMETIMES TOO INVOLVED AND NEEDS OTHER OPINIONS AS TO WHAT IS RIGHT OR WRONG ABOUT PANAMANIAN CONFIDENTIAL

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POSITIONS. ROEL SAID MEXICO REGARDS MEETING AT BOGOTA AS IMPORTANT STEP TOWARD MORE REGULAR LA CONSULTATION, COMPARING IT WITH US-MEXICAN EFFORT TO INSTITUTIONALIZE REGULAR, HIGHLEVEL, CONSULTATIONS UNDER NEW BILATERIAL MECHANISM.

PANAMA DISCUSSION THEN TURNED TO TIMING. AMBASSADORS YOUNG AND LUCEY OBSERVING THAT NEW TREATY SHOULD BE READY FOR SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS BY EARLY OCTOBER AT THE LATEST IN ORDER TO AVOID OPPOSITION "FILIBUSTER" AND INCREASE POSSIBILITY OF RATIFICATION. ROEL SAID HE WOULD TRY TT OBTAIN FOR US PANAMA'S CURRENT VIEWS AND TO IMPRESS ON TORRIJOS THE NEED TO MOVE FAST. EINAUDI "TOLD ROEL THAT US NEGOTIATORS, BUNKER AND LINOWITZ, ARE IN PANAMA NOW, AND WILL RECEIVE PANAMANIAN REACTIONS TO US DRAFT TREATY DIRECTLY. DISCUSSION OF CANAL NEGOTIATIONS CONCLUDED WITH STATEMENT BY ROEL THAT HE WOULD CALL GENERAL TORRIJOS TO ASK FOR STATUS REPORT AND TO EXERT "MORAL PRESSURE" ON PANAMA TO MOVE FORWARD AND COMPLETE NEGOTIATIONS BEFORE OCTOBER. HE SAID HE WOULD INFORM AMBASSADOR LUCEY ABOUT THE RESULTS OF HIS CONVERSATION WITH TORRIJOS.

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B. UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS. ROEL BEGAN DISCUSSION OF UN-
DOCUMENTED WORKER QUESTION BY REVIEWING FIVE CHARTS WHICH
WERE DESIGNED TO DEMONSTRATE COMPLEXITY AND LONG
HISTORY OF PROBLEM. IN GENERAL TERMS ROEL'S DISJOINTED
PRESENTATION COVERED FOLLOWING POINTS: HISTORY OF MIGRA-
TION FROM 1824 TO THE PRESENT; CAUSES (EXTERNAL US AND
INTERNAL MEXICAN) AND NATURE OF MIGRATION; STATUS OF
ALIENS IN THE US; UNCERTAIN MAGNITUDE OF PROBLEM; FINANCIAL
RAMIFICATIONS (I.E., MEXICAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO US ECONOMY
IN TAXES AND EXPENDITURES AND TO MEXICAN ECONOMY IN
REMITTANCES OF \$3 BILLION, ETC.), PRESENTATION WOULD UP
WITH A SERIES OF CONCLUSIONS, INCLUDING ROEL'S VAGUE
REFERENCE TO NEED FOR TREATY TO REGULATE STATUS OF ILLEGALS.

AMBASSADOR YOUNG, AFTER EXPRESSING APPRECIATION
FOR ROEL'S PRESENTATION, UNDERLINED USG DESIRE TO UNDERSTAND
MEXICAN POINT OF VIEW SO THAT IT CAN BE REFLECTED IN USG
PLANNING AND POLICY. YOUNG REFERRED TO UNFORTUNATE TENDENCY
IN US TO FALSELY EQUATE NUMBER OF UNDOCUMENTED ALIENS WITH
NUMBER OF US UNEMPLOYED. IN RESPONSE ROEL SAID MEXICO
RESPECTS US SOVEREIGN RIGHT TO DEAL WITH THIS ISSUE BUT
STRESSED NEED FOR BOTH COUNTRIES TO UNDERTAKE EXHAUSTIVE
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STUDY OF HISTORICAL ROOTS AND CAUSES OF PROBLEM. HE EX-

PRESSED GENERAL UNDERSTANDING AND SATISFACTION WITH CARTER PROGRAM WHICH FOR FIRST TIME REPRESENTS SERIOUS ATTEMPT TO SOLVE PROBLEM. ROEL SEEMED CONCERNED, HOWEVER, THAT US CONGRESS AND STATES MIGHT NOT ACCEPT CARTER RECOMMENDATIONS. HE REITERATED EARLIER MEXICAN OFFER TO COOPERATE IN CENSUS OF UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS.

AMBASSADOR LUCEY STRESSED HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS OF CARTER PROGRAM, PARTICULARLY NON-DEPORTABLE STATUS WHICH WOULD REMOVE CURRENT EVILS OF MISTREATMENT AND EXPLOITATION. EINAUDI REINFORCED AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENT BY EMPHASIZING THAT CARTER PROPOSALS ARE RESPONSIVE TO MOST MEXICAN CONCERNS SUCH AS NEED FOR CENSUS. HE SAID PROBLEM HAD BEEN TOO LONG NEGLECTED, RESULTING IN INEQUITABLE, UNJUST SYSTEM WHICH IT IS IN OUR MUTUAL INTEREST TO TERMINATE BY ADOPTING A MORE DEMOCRATIC AND HUMANITARIAN APPROACH. CARTER PROGRAM REFLECTED INITIAL US RESPONSE TO PROBLEM; WE NOW NEED MORE INTEGRAL FOLLOW-UP THROUGH BILATERAL MECHANISM. IN THIS CONTEXT, EINAUDI SAID, USG WOULD WELCOME MORE ACTIVE ROLE BY MEXICAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON.

REFERRING TO HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH SECRETARY VANCE, ROEL REITERATED MEXICO'S GENERAL AGREEMENT WITH CARTER PROGRAM. NEVERTHELESS, HE AGAIN EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT US CONGRESS MIGHT NOT ACCEPT IT. ROEL STATED THAT HE IS PLANNING EARLY TRIP TO WASHINGTON TO MEET WITH US CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS SUCH AS REPRESENTATIVES O'NEILL, EILBERG, RODION, AND SENATOR KENNEDY. MS. SHELTON ENCOURAGED ROEL TO VISIT U.S. CONGRESSMEN, STATING THAT THIS WOULD BE AN IMPORTANT AND USEFUL STEP TOWARD EXPLAINING GOM'S POSITION. DISCUSSION CONCLUDED WITH ROEL URGING THAT US AND MEXICAN GOVERNMENTS WORK TOGETHER TO DISCUSS AND FIND SOLUTION. CONFIDENTIAL

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C. BACKGROUND ON AID. IN BRIEF DISCUSSION AT CONCLUSION OF MEETING, MR. VALDEZ OFFERED TO PROVIDE SECRETARY ROEL WITH BACKGROUND MATERIALS ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF AID'S PROGRAMS IN LA.

2. RE EARLIER MEETING WITH PRESIDENT LOPEZ PORTILLO, AMBASSADOR LUCEY WAS IMPRESSED WITH THE THOROUGH KNOWLEDGE AND DEEP CONCERN WITH WHICH JLP ADDRESSED THE QUESTION OF UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS. HE FELT THAT IT WAS THE MOST SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION HE HAS HAD WITH THE PRESIDENT TO DATE. BUT INASMUCH AS AMBASSADOR LUCEY HAS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED ON DISCUSSIONS WITH SECRETARY ROEL ON THIS ISSUE, HE BELIEVES THAT AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S IMPRESSIONS OF THE MEETING WITH JLP WOULD BE OF GREATER INTEREST. FOX

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